Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, - - - MISSOURI

THE CHRISTMAS TIME.

Blow! Winds of Winter! Blow!
Stretch forth your viewless hands,
And waken every living thing
Through all these frozen lands!
The branches of the gnarled oak,
The hemlock's swaying limb,
All trees and shrubs, wake these to join
In one harmonious hymn;
For is not this the Christmas time,
The loving, hopeful Christmas time,
Long waited for, with faith sublime?

Fall fast! O fleecy snow!
Thy ministry is good;
The earth on greater human needs
Has little understood.
With thy deft fingers weave
A robe, of faultless seam,
And white, as angel-vestments are,
Of which the poet's dream;
For lo! the earth receives a King,
And thou, O Snow! a robe shalt bring
To grace the happy welcoming.

Fly swifter! O ye Clouds!
Through all the realms of air;
Chase Day and Night the world around,
And tell it everywhere—
To peoples, lands—a Christ is born
For every race and creed—
A living, sympathizing soul,
The very Christ they need;
That this is now the Christmas time,
The loving, hopeful Christmas time,
When want is sin and greed a crime.

Beat fast! O throbbing Heart!
And yield O stubborn Will!
In God's good time, He came at last,
Love's mission to fulfill.
He came, with pleasant words and ways,
The world's Redeemer, guest;
Gave manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest—
Gave to the world such hopes and cheer
As prophet tones or lips of seer
Could never breathe in human ear.

Vain is your task, O Winds!
And yours, O fleecy Snow!
In vain the swift-winged Clouds
Upon their mission go;
In vain, O throbbing Heart!
In prayer, or song, or creed,
Unblest by Love's sweet ministry—
Here find the Christ you need.
By sweet grace, and this alone,
His praise shall spread from zone to zone,
'Till all the earth His sway shall own.
—*Ira E. Sherman.*

MISS MARIA'S PARTY.

Old Snarley stood before the glass shaving. It was a weazen-faced, rusty bit of mirror, scarcely big enough to cast a reflection; but it meant well enough, and tried to fulfill its destiny, like some poor human mirrors, who, let them do the best they can, only blunder and distort the images that are cast upon them. Old Snarley had sharpened his razor carefully on a humped-backed bit of oil-stone; but had he made the edge as sharp and keen as the breath of the north wind, he couldn't have cut the grizzly stubble from his face without grumbling.

Old Snarley was rasping and scraping and scratching his chin, when a thud—thud—thud! came at his chamber door; not one of those clear, quick raps that startle one, and echo in the hallway, but a timid, muffled, submissive appeal for permission to come in. The door was so accustomed to Old Snarley's disposition, that it dare not sound out as the panels of some doors do; but, like all of his animate and inanimate surroundings, it had lost its individuality.

Old Snarley lifted the latch, and grunted a surly "Come in."

"Please, sir, master wishes you a merry Christmas, and would like you to look at this."

"Off with you! Off with you! you little rapscallion," shouted Old Snarley. "Can't your master keep his bills at home on Christmas Day? Is he so hard up that he must come into people's houses on holidays with his due bills? Off with you! Tell your master there's a time for everything, and when I get ready I'll pay him. Off with you!"

The boy didn't wait to hear the last of Old Snarley's words, but, leaving the paper in his hand, scampered off, and scarcely breathed again until he got around the corner.

And all that day, even after he went home to his mother's cottage, Old Snarley's face would appear before him like a phantom in a fairy-tale. And when he sat down at dinner, munching the brown meat from the turkey-bone, he could see in the steam that rose from the pudding—a plum-pudding, not rich and oily, as some people have them, but wholesome corn-meal and raisins, with sirup-sauce poured on—he could see in the vapor Old Snarley's half-shaven face, with streaks of lather under the chin, and as he looked at the pudding he thought that the little pit on the top of it was for all the world just like the shade of Old Snarley's nose.

And that night, when he lay in his bed in the attic and listened to the rumble of wagons and stages in the streets, the sounds seemed to shape themselves into a word, and the monotone of the pavement's music was "rapscallion," "rapscallion," "rapscallion."

Old Snarley slammed the door and went back to his shaving, muttering to himself as the scraping went on:

"That's the way with them—that's the way with them. An honest man can't buy anything without being bored to death by bills. Rascals are never bothered in that way. Confound me if they don't have more comfort in life than honest men!" and Old Snarley went on with his shaving.

Thud—thud—thud! went the door again. Old Snarley laid his razor down.

"Confound it!" exclaimed he, "there's another one!" And he pulled the door open with a jerk, as if all the bill collectors in the world were condensed into a door, and he had hold of it.

"Well, well; what next?" said Old Snarley, as the postman handed him a letter. "Well, well; what next?"

The postman didn't say "A merry Christmas to you, sir!"—as he had a hundred times that morning—"and may you have many returns of the same!" He knew that wishes and blessings would be lost on Old Snarley, such an ash-heap of emotions as he was. He knew that all the wishes and blessings in the world couldn't make him happy this Christmas Day; and he went off, thinking how some people were like tubs, and how some other people were like baskets.

Old Snarley, said he to himself, is one of the baskets; you could pour all the pleasures of the world into his life, and he wouldn't hold a bit. Old Mr. Twinkle, over the way, he thought, was one of the tubs; were it never so small a favor, were it never so meager a wish, or a smile, even, that he gave Mr. Twinkle, he seemed to take it all in and keep it; and the next time he met Mr. Twinkle he could see it there.

"Some people are queer," said the postman; and, pious postman that he was, he wondered why God made them so.

Old Snarley looked at the picture before him—a neat, snow-leaved letter, held in a wrinkled, angular, bony hand. A poet would have seen an allegory; purity in the grasp of parsimony; but Old Snarley was no poet, and he saw nothing of the kind; only an envelope that looked very white beside the parchment-like flesh that held it, directed, in a fine, feminine hand, to

O. L. D. SNARLEY, Esq.,
141 Jeroboam street,
Upstairs.

Old Snarley had three initials—the only superfluity he possessed—but he never used them all. It was "O. Snarley," always when he signed his name. Some people said he begrudged the ink it took to write them; but others thought it was because of the word they spelled.

"Another bill, I s'pose," said he, turning it over in his hand; "or else some women's nonsense—charity—Christmas-charity nonsense. I've got nothing for them. People should save money when they're young, if they don't want to starve when they get bed-ridden. Let a few of them starve; it'll do 'em good—must die some time—and it'll teach other folks a lesson!"

Old Snarley never did a kindness, and consequently never expected one. He saw in other people prototypes of himself; all humanity to him was molded into a single pattern—selfishness—as plaster is molded into forms of fairies and gods. Old Snarley didn't like kindness. It was to him as sunshine is to mildew; and he seldom let himself feel its warmth. He was afraid it would dry him up, perhaps, and he might crumble and blow away.

Old Snarley still eyed the letter.

"Another bill, as sure's the world!" said he. "Nice way to send 'em—miserable sneak! Why didn't he come around with it like a man, and face me? Nice way to do business—through the post!" and he opened the envelope and read:

"Mr. Silas Twinkle and Miss Twinkle present their compliments to Mr. Snarley and would like him to dine with them at two o'clock on Christmas Day.
"141 Jeroboam street, Christmas Eve."

Old Snarley was astonished; he floundered; he came near going over altogether; but recovered himself, wiped his razor, put it in a little dried up box, and wiped the lather off his face. Then he sat down and took the letter, read it over again, and looked carefully at the address; it was "O. L. D. Snarley, Esq.," as plain as the nose on his face.

"I will go," said he. "By the jumping odzookers, I will go. That man Twinkle is a noodle. He sits and smokes his pipe and chuckles all day, as if there was nothing else to be done in this world but grin and laugh. That's the man Twinkle is—nobody—nobody! I'll go; I'll show 'em; they thought I wouldn't come—I'll show them!"

And Old Snarley hurried about briskly, with the prospect of making somebody miserable.

Old Mr. Twinkle and Miss Maria lived just across the way. A little, stout, good-natured old man was he; and she was a soft-voiced, gentle little woman. Nobody knew what old Twinkle did for a living. Some said he lived off his daughter's earnings; some said he had money in the bank; and others, that he had a rich son away somewhere, who used to send him money in those letters that came to Miss Maria every Thursday morning. But Mr. Twinkle was jolly and comfortable, if he didn't have anything to do. If they asked him about business, he always chuckled, and said business didn't bother him; if they asked him how Miss Maria was doing with her scholars, he would say: "Well enough, I guess; if they don't learn of her its their own fault; she knows it all."

If any one asked him how he was going to get through "the hard times this winter," he always laughed and said: "The lame and lazy are always cared for." People got out of patience when they questioned Mr. Twinkle about his income; and where he came from nobody knew. Four years ago he and Miss Maria moved into their little house—moved in the books and the piano and the easy chairs. In a few days a sign,

INSTRUCTION IN
VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL
MUSIC,

was placed upon the door. Pupils came, and Miss Maria taught them all they ever wanted to know. Everybody loved her, but the children loved her best.

The Persians have a fable, that deeds of kindness always shed a perfume as sweet and balmy as the lotus flower. Miss Maria's presence was like this perfume.

Somebody told Mrs. Sharp, who lived around the corner, that Miss Maria had a lover somewhere; and Mrs. Sharp told Mrs. Bruce about it; and Mrs. Bruce told Mrs. Fry; and little Becky Fry overheard the story, and the next time she went to take her music lesson she looked up into Miss Maria's face and said, in a frank, childish way:

"Miss Maria, were you ever in love?"

Miss Maria stooped till her lips touched the little girl's forehead, and hiding her eyes in the soft hair, answered:

"Yes, dearie, often; I am in love with you."

She kissed the little girl again, and, turning silently to her piano, absently caressed the keys, until Becky called her to herself again. Becky told her mother that Miss Maria acted "very queer" that afternoon.

Old Snarley came promptly at two o'clock. Mr. Twinkle met him at the door with a cordial "Merry Christmas," and a squeeze of the hand that made Old Snarley squirm. Miss Maria welcomed him into a bright parlor, and rolled a huge easy chair up to the grate for him, beside the one in which her father sat. And Mr. Twinkle sat down and talked politics with Old Snarley, and assented to all of Old Snarley's notions and whims, so that he had no chance to argue or grumble; and so magical was the firelight that its flickering seemed to make a smile on Old Snarley's face; and so comfortable was the chair that he forgot himself and was really contented.

"I am glad you came over, sir—glad you came over," said Mr. Twinkle to his guest, when the conversation had lagged for want of a topic. "I pity you from the bottom of my heart, living over there all alone, Mr. Snarley; indeed, I do. Life hasn't so many pleasures that we can afford to throw any away. I don't understand, Mr. Snarley, why you should shut yourself up from all your fellow-men, as you do. If you were a King in exile, it would do; if you had lost all your money and friends, you might have some excuse; if your heart had been torn out of you by a faithless wife and unnatural children, or if you were troubled by some great remorse, it would be pardonable; but you ought to get out more, and cultivate folks, and let the sunshine into your heart."

Old Snarley gazed into the fire. His eyes were fixed upon the jolly, dancing, Christmas flames, but his mind was far away. Mr. Twinkle had touched a key that set his whole memory vibrating, and the glowing coals and the cordial atmosphere of the room seemed to thaw out his frosted heart.

Somewhere down on the sea coast of New England are quaint inscriptions carved upon the rocks, that are never seen except at dead low tide. The billows of selfishness and greed had pounded Snarley's heart so long that the scars of remorse made upon it years ago were almost effaced; but the tide was low now, and Old Snarley saw them very distinctly.

Mr. Twinkle continued: "I can't imagine, Mr. Snarley, what you think life is. I don't understand what kind of stuff you are made of. I should die in a fortnight, if I lived as you do—I know I should. By the great Tycoon, Snarley, I want to stir you up a little to-day! We're going to have a good dinner, and some little folks and some fun. I don't believe I ever saw you laugh, Snarley. I don't believe I ever did."

Old Snarley made no reply.

Mr. Twinkle turned around and looked at him, thinking to himself: "I don't believe the old beasler heard a word I said," but the amused smile that was playing around his lips was chased away by a shadow, as he saw what he thought was a tear rolling down one of the gutters in Snarley's face.

The kindly old gentleman pulled hard at his pipe, and blew the smoke to the ceiling, wondering to himself what in the world had touched Old Snarley now.

Snarley gazed into the fire still.

Miss Maria entered. "Will the gentlemen walk down to the dining-room?"

Mr. Twinkle took Old Snarley by the arm and led him down to the basement. There was the dinner—and such a dinner! A brown turkey was lying on his back, with his legs in the air, and, beside him, a rich, ripe ham, stuck all around with cloves, as St. Sebastian was with arrows; a steaming coffee-pot, and a pyramid of bread as white as a snow-heap.

Old Snarley bowed to the hostess, and silently took his seat.

Mr. Twinkle twinkled all over with sunshiny smiles, and talked incessantly. Miss Maria sat silently; but her eyes, which seemed always to be looking at something far away, were bright and beautiful; and Mr. Twinkle, who always did like to look into Miss Maria's eyes, noticed that they were particularly beautiful to-day; and then he looked into the sunlight for relief.

Scarcely was dessert served, when there was a rush of childish feet across the floor above and a murmur of childish voices came like a gush of melody down the stairs.

"There are the little folks, Maria," said Mr. Twinkle; "they better be looked after, I guess."

Old Snarley started nervously. He didn't like children, nor did children like him. Old Snarley always forgot that he was once a child, and the children always forgot they owed respect to age, even though heartless, like his. But Mr. Twinkle popped off again.

"Never mind the little folks, Snarley; never mind 'em. Maria has got some fixin's upstairs, and I want you to see 'em. It will do you good, Snarley—it will do you good."

Old Snarley sat uncomfortably in his chair. The conflict of emotions that was going on within him was something new. People who have lived in dungeons say that sunshine is painful to them when they come out. Old Snarley had been living so long in the dungeons of discontent that it was with difficulty that he could breathe this air of pure happiness, and he was bewildered by hospitality. Old Snarley felt very queer.

When the dessert was finished, and Mr. Twinkle and his uneasy guest had sipped their coffee, the host led the way to the parlors, where Miss Maria and her music class were busy with some mysterious preparations. When the children saw Old Snarley they talked in a subdued, dismal manner, as people do when there is a coffin in the house; but Miss Maria closed the doors between the two parlors, and Old Snarley sank into the easy chair again, more bewildered than ever. When a burst of laughter came from behind the panels he would move about nervously; but he watched the clouds of smoke that rose from Mr. Twinkle's pipe, and gazed again into the fire. In his half-dream Old Snarley saw strange pictures.

It was as if the wand of a necromancer had touched the past, and the musty, shriveled years had come out to shake their garments and pass in review before his bewildered mind. He saw childhood, and youth, and pleasure; he saw love, and the kisses of betrothal pressed his gaunt lips; he heard marriage bells, saw the glitter of a ring, and scented the perfume of flowers; he saw a house, and a wife, and a child that bore features strangely like his own; he saw clouds hovering over a hearthstone, and in the rapid panorama that seemed to unfold itself from the blazing coals in the grate, came jealousy whispering suspicion in his ear; the sound of harsh words and cruel blows, piteous appeals for mercy, and a haggard face shaped itself among the glowing embers; then he saw a wife with a child in her arms leave his dwelling to come back no more; he tried to call her, but cruel pride silenced his tongue. There was a change of scene—new faces and a new atmosphere; remorse and loneliness gave way to a selfish indifference, and the picture grew misty and uncertain, and as it passed away he caught a glimpse of a dreary back chamber and bags of gold.

These pictures set Old Snarley trembling, and he shook as if he had been seized with convulsions. The parlor doors opened. He heard music, and he thought he saw something beautiful before him—an animated picture, glowing faces, bright costumes; and only half realizing his existence, Old Snarley wondered if things were as they seemed to him.

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted jolly old Mr. Twinkle.

Old Snarley looked again; but there was a mist before him, and the figures in the room were whirling. He sank back into his chair and closed his eyes lest he should fall. But he couldn't close his ears, and he heard sounds that went further down into his heart, he thought, than his own memory. It was a simple minor melody, plaintive and subdued at first, but growing stronger and more impulsive as it was lengthened out, until it broke into impatient bursts of sound; and it seemed to Old Snarley like the spirit of the past within him crying for release. He would have screamed, but his suffering was too intense for utterance, and he sat there with his hands clenched till the tendons of his arms ached and his feet were frozen to the floor. The sound changed; the movement modulated into soothing tenderness, and then into a soft, delicious cadence—and Old Snarley breathed again.

As Miss Maria held the concluding chords under her hands the door bell rang, and without waiting for a response, a tall, brown-faced, big-whiskered young fellow entered.

Miss Maria cried out something, and in an instant was hidden in the tall young man's arms. Mr. Twinkle pranced about the room regardless of his rheumatism, and gave utterance to ejaculations I have no reason to record here. The children seized their hats and bonnets and ran home to tell their mothers that Miss Maria's lover had come; and Old Snarley staggered, unnoticed, into the hall-way and into the street.

It was dark when Old Snarley reached his lodgings, for so bewildered was he that he lost himself in the throngs in the street, and wandered, no one knows how far, before he came to himself again. He crept up to his cold chamber like a guilty thing. He poured so much coal on the fire that the grate groaned, so unused was it to such prodigality; and he sank into his chair exhausted.

"It is he," he murmured, "it is my son. They called him Charley—that was *his* name, and his mother's eyes were looking at me as I passed him. I will see him to-morrow. I will tell him that I loved his mother, and find her if I have to go to the end of the world. She may be dead, but he is my son, my son," and his voice died in broken gasps.

Old Snarley paced the creaky floor of his chamber, muttering disconnected sentences that even the spiders in the corners could not hear; and then, taking a bunch of rusty keys from his pocket, he opened a chest that had stood—his landlady said "ages"—in the corner, and he took from it a woman's dresses, and bonnets, and ribbons, faded and dusty and old, and children's garments, musty and moth-eaten. Old Snarley looked at the pile till his head swam, and he staggered to his chair. There he sat, his head buried in his hands, till the clock had struck nine—ten—eleven—twelve—one.

The coals he had heaped on the grate were a pile of ashes; the room was as cold as a cellar again. Old Snarley shivered, looked at his watch absently, and, taking the garments that lay on the floor, put them back carefully into the chest, closed the lid and locked it. The lines on his face had softened; the old, hard look in his eyes was gone.

Two days passed by, and regularly each morning Old Snarley was seen going into Mr. Twinkle's door. The second day he came out in the afternoon, leaning on the tall young man's arm; and the two went together down the street.

Miss Maria looked as if she had bathed in the waters of Lethe, and had washed away the traces of a dozen years. Old Mr. Twinkle talked and smoked more than ever. The postman passed the house on Thursday without leaving a letter.

On the morning of the third day this advertisement appeared in the newspapers:

BUSINESS NOTICE.—All persons having unsettled accounts with O. L. D. Snarley, Broker, 141 Jeroboam street, are hereby notified to present them at the office of Fixem & Fry for adjustment, within thirty days.

The sign that had been on Mr. Twinkle's door so long was taken down by the house-maid. In a few days a card, "To Let," was posted in its place, and Old Snarley's landlady was advertising for a lodger.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

An Alaska Coal Mine.

Near Cape Lisburne, at the "Arctic coal mine," twenty tons of coal were dug and carried aboard in sacks in one day. These mines are within the Arctic circle, some distance on the American side, and are plainly exposed from top to bottom in the face of a perpendicular bluff, about 150 feet in height. Their widths are from three to twenty feet, and such as are under ten feet are pure coal, while those over are nearly so, slate being slightly mixed. The veins pitch at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and are numerous. On the tundra, or grassy plain above, the ledges can be followed for miles, and after pitching down the precipice they can be traced across the sandy beach until lost in the sea. Such as taken by the Corwin was surface coal, lying about in great chunks, weighing one-half ton or more, which had to be broken up before being handled. It was something between anthracite and bituminous, burned well and made but little smoke, although it left a great deal of ashes. In handling it left but little dirt, and for use it gave excellent satisfaction. It is thought that depth will show it to be a fine quality of anthracite coal. These mines have been known to whalers for some years, and now that steam whalers are coming into vogue they will probably be well patronized.

—One of the wealthiest men in Danville, Pa., has all his notes and checks made payable to bearer, and has never lost one of them. His name is Bearer

The Talmudists.

To those doctors of the law, the Old Testament, from beginning to end, was a congeries of riddles, to the solution of which they dedicated their lives. In comparison with their own tortuous and mystical explanations, the plain grammatical sense had little interest for them. The inspired text they used to compare to water, but their Mishna, or oral tradition to wine, and their Gemara or commentary to spiced wine. Every verbal resemblance, however superficial, every variation of spelling and peculiarity of arrangement or order, suggested to them a mystery; out of texts arbitrarily pieced together, meanings were evolved for which not a shadow of warrant could be found; from the mere metaphors latent in common speech portentous conclusions were deduced; in the numerical values of the letters of which words were composed occult meanings were discovered. The results may be imagined, and were perhaps surprising even to the scribes themselves in their saner moments, for among their traditions is one which depicts the amazement of Moses, when in vision he saw some Rabbi of the future extracting whole bushel-loads of meanings and decisions from every angle, curl, and horn of every letter of the law. We shall try, by a few specimens of the more quotable sort, to give an idea of the Rabbinical style of handling Scripture. It might seem to an unsophisticated reader rather difficult to determine from the text—"The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider"—what kind of scourge should be used to inflict the "forty stripes save one" on those who broke the law. But the ingenuity of the Rabbis was not to be foiled. Ought not the men who know not to be beaten by the animals whose knowledge shames them? Then twist together thongs of ox-hide and ass-hide, and lay the compounded lash on the back of the guilty. Out of Laban's invitation to Abraham's servant—"Come in, for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels"—evidence was extracted to show that the piety of the freat father of the faithful was so transcendent and contagious as to be shared even by his camels, for by imagining some occult connection between the phrases for "making ready the house" and "removing idols," the meaning was reached that the camels piously declined to enter till the emblems of idolatry had been cleared out. In praise of the phylacteries or little leathern boxes containing texts from the law, which the Jews were accustomed to bind on the brow and left arm, a proof that they were worn by Jehovah Himself was found in the text: "Jehovah hath sworn by His right hand and the arm of his strength"—i. e., the left arm bound with one of those curious amulets. But on entering a cemetery it was ruled that they should be taken off, on the ground that those who wore them in the presence of the dead would be guilty of the insolent ostentation condemned in the passage, "Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker." On the narrative which relates that the news of the capture of Lot was brought to Abraham by "one that had escaped," the curious myth was founded of the escape of Og, the King of Bashan, from the Deluge, his gigantic stature being supposed to have enabled him to wade beside the ark till the waters subsided. —*Blackwood's Magazine.*

GENERAL.

—Emile Zola wrote to the Connecticut parents who had named their boy after him, advising that he be made a man of science, rather than trained for "the career of literature, where there is nothing to reap but bitterness and disappointment."

—The other day a stage driver in the Black Hills undertook to horsewhip the passengers into getting out of the stage and pushing it up hill, but the passengers emptied their revolvers into him a few times, held a Coroner's inquest, and found that he had died of pneumonia.—*Chicago Herald.*

—The Irish Lambs, a Montreal society, took offence at the manner in which the Irishmen of the New York shanties were put on the stage, in the play of "Squatter Sovereignty," and sent word to the theater that they would whip the entire company if a reformation was not made. On the following night the actors appeared in evening dress, with faces clean and hair neatly brushed.—*N. Y. Sun.*

—The new permanent station for the signal service at Pike's Peak has at length been completed, as well as the construction of a telegraph line to connect the station at the summit of the mountain with the world below. The signal station is 14,000 feet above sea level and 6,000 feet above Colorado Springs, and is constructed of granite laid in cememt, to resist the furious storms of that locality.—*Chicago Times.*

—In his proclamation for a day of thanksgiving, Gov. James, of North Carolina, said to its people: "The crops have been more abundant than ever before harvested in the State. Peace has everywhere prevailed within our borders. The health of the people has been extraordinarily good; while their progress in educational and material interest, and in the cultivation of a high moral and religious sentiment, has been equally satisfactory."

—Young men who call their fathers "Governor," without intentional disrespect, will be surprised to learn from Rev. Dr. Iræneus Prime that they are guilty of bad manners. He says that they illustrate the increased irreverence for age, and a marked decline in respect for the aged. "There is no use in telling me," he says in the *Observer*, "that parents, teachers and officers command as much respect as they ever did, and just as much as they deserve. I know better."

—"I see that your son is out of the penitentiary," said a man to an acquaintance. "Yes; we proved that insanity was the cause of his killing the fellow, and they turned him out on probation." "How's that?" "They said they'd let him stay out a day or two, and if he acted like a crazy man they'd let him stay out permanently. Well, he acted like he was insane, and I reckon he'll stay out." "How did he act like he was insane?" "By killing another man."—*Arkansaw Traveller.*

THE GREAT FIRE IN LONDON.

Destruction of About a Block of Tall Warehouses Filled With Costly Bales—Loss Estimated at About $15,000,000—Eight Persons Hurt During the Fire.

LONDON, Eng., December 8.

This city has suffered within the past twenty-four hours from the greatest fire with which London has been afflicted since the great conflagration in Tooley street, in the Borough, about eighteen years ago, when immense warehouses filled with jute and other goods were destroyed. This fire caused a loss of about £4,000,000, and during the progress, Mr. Braidwood, then Chief of the London Fire Department, and a number of firemen lost their lives by the falling of a wall.

The fire which broke out last night and which is not yet extinguished, although it was gotten under control about noon to-day, also resulted in loss of life from the same cause. It is believed that eight persons were injured, some fatally.

Following as closely as this great conflagration has done in the burning of the Alhambra Theater, in Leicester Square, which alarmed all London, the disaster has created intense excitement. The actual loss is estimated at £3,000,000, and the destruction extended over an entire square in the heart of the city.

The fire broke out in the wholesale hosiery establishment of Foster, Porter & Co., limited, which is situated on the corner of Addle street and Wood street, Cheapside. It spread rapidly, defying all the efforts of the firemen, although nearly every engine in London was summoned to the spot when the magnitude of the conflagration was realized. From Foster, Porter & Co.'s it extended north to the immense warehouses of Ryland & Sons, limited, dealers in flowers and fancy goods and Manchester warehousemen. By this time it had become entirely beyond control, and it progressed rapidly along the east side of Wood street until London wall and Hart street were reached. At the same time the flames ate their way back to Philip lane, a narrow thoroughfare running parallel with Wood street. Within these limits almost everything was destroyed, the only exception being a warehouse in the northwestern corner of the square, on London wall. Brewers' Hall, in Aldermanbury, was threatened, but the fire was stopped before reaching that historic structure, and Sion College and St. Alphage Church also escaped.

The point where the fire originated is only about 100 yards from the Guildhall, and if the wind had changed there was nothing to save that building. Many of the oldest of the city churches, including several of the finest specimens of Sir Christopher Wren's work, lie within a stone's throw of the scene, and in the immediate vicinity are the General Post-office, Goldsmith's Hall, Coopers' Hall, Haberdashers' Hall and Barber-Surgeons' Hall. The entire district is devoted to the wholesale trade, many firms occupying several houses which have been converted from residences and shops into warehouses. The streets are all very narrow, with the exception of London wall, where the fire was stayed.

It is impossible to-day to do more than make a rough estimate of the loss, as no details of individual losses can be obtained. However, it is not believed that £3,000,000 will cover it. Nothing is known accurately as to the insurance, but the amount must be very large, as it is customary to insure to very nearly the full value of goods in stock.

A Battle With a Buck.

For nearly two years there has been confined at Bismarck Grove, Lawrence, Kan., a large buck, and which until recently was always considered a kind and docile animal, and on account of its good behavior and gentle bearing in the past was given the very highly complimentary name of "Garfield." However it transpired last Friday morning that the notorious and world-wide name of "Guiteau" would have been much more appropriate for the beast, as the following will signify: Last Friday Mr. Frank McGrade, familiarly know about the grove as "Old Jimmie," went into a pen containing the buck "Garfield," together with his companions, for the purpose of giving them a fresh supply of water. As Mr. McGrade stepped to the trough to turn on the water "Garfield" made himself obnoxious to his keeper, and Mr. McGrade attempted to chastise him by hitting him over the head with a stick which he carried in his hand, whereupon "Garfield" retaliated by knocking his master flat on his back and then attempting to finish him by goring him with his horns. A desperate battle ensued between McGrade and the animal. The buck pounced upon his helpless victim in a terrible fury, tearing his clothes entirely from his body. Finally McGrade succeeded in getting the animal's ear in his mouth and held on to it like grim death, almost chewing the member off, with both hands holding to his horns. In this way McGrade succeeded in keeping his antagonist from butting his life out right there and then. McGrade held the beast in this position for nearly fifteen minutes, when the buck's attention was attracted by his companions for some unaccountable reason, which undoubtedly saved McGrade's life, as the buck pulled loose and dashed off to their assistance. Mr. McGrade struggled to his feet as best he could and made his escape through the gate.

Mr. McGrade was terribly mangled and disfigured, and upon examination of his body it was found that two of his ribs were broken, his face and head cut in a frightful manner, and his hands lacerated terribly by the spikes from the buck's horns. A *Journal* reporter called on Mr. McGrade late last evening at his office, and found him resting quietly and doing as well as possible, although he is considerably crippled and lame. His escape was miraculous, and had he not presence of mind enough to lie still after the buck had knocked him down, he would have certainly been killed.

Since the above fight occurred "Buckie Garfield" has passed in his checks at the end of a double-barreled shot-gun loaded with "buckshot."—*Lawrence (Kan.) Journal.*

Poisoned by Cosmetics.

A dispatch from New Orleans, received in New York the other day, announced the death in the Hotel Dieu of Miss Cassie Troy, the well-known emotional actress, who has been traveling with the Carrie Swain Dramatic Company, supporting Miss Swain in the play of "Cad, the Tomboy." Miss Troy had been complaining for some time of frequent sharp pains and of rushing of blood to her head. On November 27, while the company was playing at Bidwell's Academy of Music, she appeared in the first act in her usual character of Emma, the adventuress. As the curtain fell on the first act she was seized with sudden illness, and could not proceed with her part. A physician who was called pronounced her ailment painters' colic. Her part was taken by Miss Ella Hunt, and she was removed to the Hotel Dieu in a precarious condition. On Wednesday last she was much improved, but not well enough to proceed with the company to Mobile. She remained in the hotel in care of a kind acquaintance. Her disease, however, grew worse, until death relieved her sufferings. It was believed she died of blood-poisoning, superinduced by the use of cosmetics necessary to her make-up in the parts she played. An examination of her make-up box showed that she was in the habit of using large quantities of a paste containing a preparation of lead, which is believed to be poisonous.

BRIDESBURG, a suburb of Philadelphia, has a plague of cats. Farmers on the way to the city from Bucks county have been in the habit for years of dropping their supernumerary felines in the vicinity of Bridesburg, and this, with the natural increase of the cat population, has made sleep impossible to the inhabitants of the place.